(c) to (g) Chief Commissioner Railway Safety had raised some issues ragarding the health monitoring and strength assessment of old bridges, which have been suitably addressed and replied. Infact, Chief Commissioner Railway Safety has appreciated efforts made by Railways in finding suitable diagnostic techniques available World over for monitoring the health of various components of old bridges. The life of Railway bridges is not determined by age but on physical condition as asessed through inspections. Railway does not propose to abandon old railway bridges merely based on their age.

(h) The Special Railway Safety Fund was started in 2001-02. 1920 bridges out of proposed 2370 bridges have been rebuilt/repaired/ rehabilitated till 31.03.2006. Balance bridges will be completed by 31.03.2008.

Commission Vendors

543. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2540 given in Rajya Sabha on the 17th March, 2006 arid state:

(a) whether a commission vendor would be allowed to run his/her present occupation if he/she does not opt for absorption;

(b) whether it is a fact that so far and so long the cases of transfer of vendorship of the deceased commission vendors used to be transferred in the name of legal heir;and

(c) if so, what has prevented to follow the precedences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) No, Sir. In terms of Board's letter No. 2004/TG.III/639/2 dated: 1.12.2005 Commission vendors who do not opt for absorption even after maximum permissible two opportunities should be treated as "not interested" and should be debarred.

(b) and (c) In terms of Board's letter No. 92/TG.III/600/42 dated 10.03.1993, transfer of vendorship to legal heirs of deceased commission bearers/vendors is permissible on sympathetic grounds.